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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

HINTS ON THE CARE OF WHITE RATS AND MICE.

Cages:

A safe cage for rats, mice, and other rodents is one made entirely of galvanized wire netting. There should be a narrow slit along the floor, on one side, for the insertion of a shallow zinc tray to be kept filled with sawdust or other absorbent, and to be washed in scalding water whenever it becomes offensive. The floor of a mouse cage should not be less than 10 by 12 inches. The height of a cage is not important, but 6 or 8 inches are sufficient. A satisfactory size for a rat cage is 12 by 16 inches. A wheel or some rough branches within a cage encourages animals to take exercise and makes them more interesting. The nest box containing cotton, two bits of cloth, or soft paper, should be fitted with a slide door and be fastened to a wall so as to be easily detached. An occupied cage should not be placed in a draft of air or in the sun.

Food:

Rats and mice eat nuts, grain, bread, fruit, and scraps of meat. Nuts should never be cracked for them, as their ever-growing teeth become useless when not worn down by gnawing hard substance. Overfeeding invites diseases. A clean water dish and fresh water are necessities.

Breeding:

When young are expected, each female should have an entire cage to herself, and be disturbed as little as possible. Nothing tending to excite or alarm her should be permitted. Any attempt to handle or view the young while they are without hair is hazardous.

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